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*The CAUSES that obstruct the progress of
REFORMATION: with the MEANS
that warrant its HOPES, and SUCCESS.*

A 20
S E R M O N
PREACHED TO THE
S O C I E T Y
FOR
Reformation of Manners,

On FRIDAY MAY 17, 1765.

IN THE
Parish Church of *St. Swithin, London-Stone.*
And Published at their united Request.

By M O S E S B R O W N E,
Chaplain of MORDEN-COLLEGE, Blackheath, and
Vicar of OLNEY, Bucks.

*And shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way,
take up the Stumbling-block out of the way of my peo-
ple. Isa. lvii. 14.*

L O N D O N :

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THE SECRETARY OF THE
TREASURY
WASHINGTON
D. C.

Very truly yours,
The Secretary

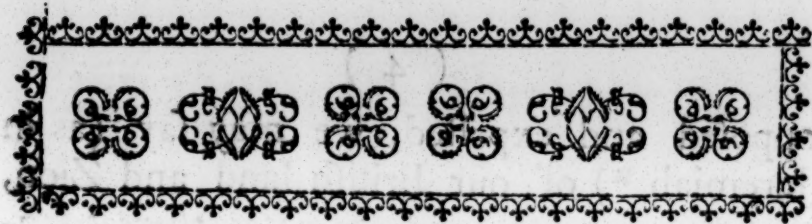
Enclosed and herewith
transmitted are
the reports of the
Commissioners of
the General Land
Office, and of the
Bureau of Reclamation,
for the year ending
June 30, 1900.
The reports of the
Commissioners of the
General Land Office
show the progress
of the work of the
Department during
the year, and the
status of the various
lands under the
control of the
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NEHEMIAH, iv. 10.

And Judah said the strength of the *bearers of burdens* is decay'd, and there is MUCH RUBBISH; so that we are not able to build the wall.

 HIS, which was the complaint of these good men of the tribe of Judah, in their day, when they were rebuilding up Jerusalem out of its ruined and desolate state, after a return from their seventy years captivity in Babylon, may aptly, and with much propriety, be applied to you the members and friends of the REFORMING SOCIETY, met here at this time ; and furnish a suitable subject and matter of solemn discourse—whose circumstances and whose work are (in a moral sense) much like what we read here of Jerusalem and Nehemiah's. And from the flood of wickedness and licentiousness, immorality and darkness that has broken, and is farther breaking in upon us ; if not
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opposed and expelled, we may say (as in Jeremiah *) of our British land and Zion, that *she mourneth, and the gates thereof languish; they lie black upon the ground.*—Her walls and bulwarks, the care and vigorous endeavours of reformation, and the preserving outward public order and decency (as well as the cultivating inward vital religion, and the doctrines and power of the gospel, the only means that can promote and effect it) have gone sadly backward, and for several years, hardly maintained a stand; till by your *late* worthy exemplary attempt.—By which, as by the voice of a national providence, and a token of still intended, long-enduring mercy, our princes and nobles, the rich and great, the common people, and the poor of our Israel; all are once more called upon, like these Jerusalem repairers, in their several abilities and stations, for their mutual appearance, concurrence and help.—To assist this purpose, and that those now present may (by a divine blessing on what shall be spoken) get some profit by their attendance, let us see what improvement we can make of the text that has been read, both for information and duty, and examine how the several parts of it agree to ourselves.

In order to do this to our own use as we ought, let us observe.

* Chap. xiv. v. 2.

I. Who where the instruments it speaks of, the *bearers of burdens*, employ'd in the work.

II. Their *complaint*, with what *thereof* may relate to us, that *their strength was decayed*.

III. The impediment and discouragements, or (in the words here used) *the much rubbish* in the way, that obstructed *their* success, and is the stop to *yours*.

IV. The *helps* they notwithstanding found (*and we shall find*) that supported and carried them through to begin and prosecute the work with success.

And LASTLY, the APPLICATION, that is properly and seasonably to be made of the whole.

I. Who were the instruments and bearers of burdens the text speaks of that were to assist Jerusalem in rebuilding her wall.

These were the whole body of the people, that were to join in, and take their several parts of the work : none were left out or discharged from it, as an expected duty ; or could suppose or pretend themselves exempted or excused ; however they might behave themselves, as enemies and opposers of the public good, and might shew their disinclination, or little affection to the undertaking.

The names and conditions of the principal of these that were so worthily employ'd, you have recorded very particularly in the chapter before the text—they that distinguishedly honour God, he hath said, *he will honour*, and leaves their names on lasting record in his holy word, as well as he hath put them into the book of life. Agreeably to what is spoken in the prophet Malachy * of those that eminently feared the Lord, that *a book of remembrance, of such, was written before him; and of those that thought upon his name*—to whom is made this gracious, encouraging promise, *They shall be mine, saith THE LORD OF HOSTS in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.*

Of these repairers, these noble and voluntary *bearers of burdens*, that in this passage of scripture are immortally famous, the first we are told that rose up † was the High-Priest, with his brethren—dignity and easy stations of life, did not make them think themselves above, or ashamed of the honourable employment—*they rose up*—an expression intimating their forwardness and activity—reformation and repairing of our fallen bulwarks should be first set on foot by the ministers and watchmen of the sanctuary; who are to stir up, and lead others on, by their exhortation and example. —

* Chap. iii. v. 16, 17.

† Neh. iii. 1.

They that are illuminated to have the true knowledge and understanding in, and are dispensers of the saving word, are *both by their preaching and living, to set it forth, and shew it accordingly*,—as we read Haggai, and Zacharias, and Ezra, † (cotemporaries with Nehemiah) the prophets and priests of the Lord did; encouraging and strengthening this people, with comforting arguments and divine promises, against the many adversaries that rose up to scoff at, and oppose them round about.

After these we find the rest of the people built; the governors and heads of houses, each one with their families, in their several appointed places. When all hands unite in a good cause the business they set about will go on fast and prosperously—and we read of one, especially distinguished and honoured for his zeal herein, Baruch the son of Zab-bai (or Zacchai) it is said of him (v. 20.) that he *earnestly repaired*—his heart and delight was in it, and gave a shining pattern for others—at the 5th. verse mention is made of the Tekoites who themselves (indeed) assisted, but a note of disgrace is added (and would to God it was the only case) that *their nobles put not their neck to the work of the Lord* — Evil examples, or neglect of good ones in the rich and great are a grief to the truly religious, and dispiriting to all—are apt to have a pernicious influence on

† Ezra vi. 13.

their dependants and all else of a lower class : and in the case before us, might make others backward and refuse lending a helping hand, and cause this complaint (in the text) of Judah (of which tribe the Tekoites were a part) *the strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed*—which was the

II. Head to be considered.

This, as has been just observed, was from the indifference, want of zeal and declining principles of those, who by their characters and stations in life ought to have been most forward in setting a leading example to the whole community, and was a visible and deplored degeneracy from the simplicity and active temper of better times, of which memorials are left us in the sacred records ; and of men that we find there of an excellent spirit, famous in their generations.—

And has our own condition been less blest? We have had men alike eminent for integrity, wisdom and courage ; counsellors, and persons in highest office, of abilities to know and discern *the signs of the times*, and of probity and fortitude to advise and act accordingly—nobles and statesmen, senators and magistrates, remarkable for behaving worthily, and filling up their characters with dignity, in their zeal and regard for piety and religion, and the discountenancing
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and crushing iniquity and profaneness—*men fearing God, and hating covetousness*—were esteemed and accounted a public-spirited, honest, politically wise and valiant race of men, and were ever while such a prosperous, a happy and successful people.

In the glorious days of our first reformers and holy martyrs and those that succeeded, we enjoyed a number of excellent bishops renowned for their devotion, labours and orthodoxy; careful to preach, and exact of their dioceses, a close adherence to our pure and sound articles, and (as the scripture has exprest it) * *valiant for the truth upon the earth.—Contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.* † We had a clergy every where respected; grave and meek, not loving pleasures, remarkably affectionate to the cause of CHRIST, and interests of his gospel; feeding painfully and wholesomly the souls of their flocks,

We were known in our cities and villages for having many praying persons, and praying families — contented with making appearances suitable to their circumstances, professions and stations—nor led away with the pleasures and fashionable excesses, the idle customs and pride of the world; but were diligent, useful and of approved fidelity in their callings—made conscience of living

* Jerem. ix. 3. † Jude v. 3.

ving like Christians themselves, of governing and training up their children and servants with strictness, in œconomy and a regard to God, and duties, and sabbaths.

Our men of distinguished rank and title, and those that abounded in wealth — instead of having their names placed foremost (in public print) at promoting horse-races, gaming assemblies, and nurseries of vices, and hurtful diversions — instead of lavishing their estates in extravagant entertainments, treats and balls, and on modish expensive equipages—of engaging in parties and associations, mean and sordidly selfish, and too plainly of an apparently enslaving tendency; they were studious of methods to relieve or employ the industrious poor, apprentice out their burthen some off-spring, or destitute orphans—to endow the small livings of laborious necessitous ministers with comfortable, sufficient maintenance; and keep houses and tables, open and filled, for refreshment of their dependant neighbours with families, and industrious tenants—where do we now, scarcely, hear of a noble person or gentleman of plentiful fortune, founding a school for the children of the poor; augmenting an impoverished living in his patronage, or looking into the moral behaviour, and keeping up a religious discipline among his domestics? How many antient books of excellent

lent sense and piety do you see with the Names of persons of our first quality before the dedications ? And how few (or do you see any in this day) unless some modern novel or play, with Those of a great lord or lady prefixed as patrons ? — This has often in the consideration afforded deepest concern. — Are we in every of the aforementioned instances ALL what we were — or, alas ! in some that have been mentioned, may we not fear we have too much reason for the *men of Judah's* complaint, *that our strength is decayed*, and we become like them — a sinfully diminished and weakened people. Which will lead me in observing,

III. The impediments and discouragements, that obstructed the building the walls of theirs, as (in an equal sense) it does that of our Jerusalem ; *the much rubbish* the text speaks of, that stops all desired progress, and clogs it with delay, as well as yields a prospect the most displeasing and disheartning.

Where a wall of defence, of a large and mighty city or kingdom, is become greatly ruinous, or fallen down, the care and former attempts for reformation at a stay, or for any considerable time laid aside ; mountains of filth will gather, and weeds of every hurtful kind, shoot up and grow — while men slept, our Lord observing in the parable, *the enemy sowed tares*. And what plentiful

tiful crops of these, even in *every place*, are sprung up among us. — We profess to call ourselves the people of the Lord—a protestant, reformed people; and yet how very little (considered in the whole) of this appears! — how little of the love of God, and of his holy truth are to be found among us! — What contempt in some? what neglect in others? and what indifference in the most, does too visibly appear! — What a lukewarmness and coldness, and deadness, and formality, a meer shew and hypocrisy, are the generality sunk into! — Where will you hear scarcely any person speak, a serious and affectionate word at most, of the things of God, and of the great salvation? — Nay, this is made now a mark of unpoliteness, ignorance, and rude breeding; that ought to be the glory of our tongues, and the pleasure of our hearts—the testimony of our reason, and the evidence of our sense, and good understanding — for *the fear of the Lord, THAT is WISDOM,* and by IT men depart from evil.†* Does the ordinary conversation of most shew that they walk any other ways than after the course of this world in their whole deportment, speeches and actions? — And if persons shew any concern to promote the power and life of religion in their own or neighbour's souls, is not this scoffed

* Job. xxviii. 28.

† Prov. xvi. 6.

scoffed at, made suspicious — at best pity'd and loathed with some ill-intended appellation, and the charge of *being righteous over-much*—and the greater part of good people are ashamed out of their duty and best interests by a sinful regard for the opinions of men, and the fear of a name.—A christian openly (while at the same time prudently) zealous for the honour, and interests, and gospel of his Master, is a rare thing, and may be said of them, as of Joshua, and his brethren, in the book of Zechariah, *they are men wondering at*, and if the Son of Man was now to come, might it not (comparatively) be asked, as he foretold, *should he find faith upon the earth ?* *—And if judgment, as the scripture hath declared, must first begin *at the house of God* †—may we not have too just cause to dread that he *will visit for these things, and his soul be avenged on a people like this ?*

How high a spirit of pride, in all the extravagant fashions and luxuries, has infected and infatuated the many different ranks of persons, especially of the younger sort—how mad a love and impatience after public diversions and pleasures have unbent the mind and led the pursuits of most into all the entertainments of levity and sensual delights—and particularly made the lives of

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* Luke xviii. 8. † 1 Pet. iv. 17.

our people of fortune and distinction little else than a busy attendance on idleness, riot and folly—very little of any thing, but meetings for consuming the time of mornings and evenings ; at routs and assemblies, that are spread now almost into every considerable town in the country ; to spoil the innocency and simplicity of the natives with false notions of life—to encourage vanity in dress, and the affectation of appearance ; in a neglect of the government, and right education of families to beget a passion and fondness in the utmost excess for music, dancings, cards, and revellings, and gratifying *the lusts of the flesh, of the eye, and the pride of life* ; and dissipate and root out all serious, useful consideration and thought.—These have almost engrossed the inclinations and attentions of the rich and great to the exclusion of better antient living and famed *English hospitality* : and corrupted, in some measure, the whole body of the people—where all these vanities which are our shame once known, or ever practised by the early primitive followers of Christ, or such as passed by the name of his disciples ?—or by our better, wiser ancestors ?—is this a denying ourselves, daily taking our Lord's cross and not conforming to, and being dead to the world, that his precepts enjoin us ?—have not men, some how or other, been made to believe that
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there may be such a thing as a profession, and becoming Christians, as will agree with all the customs, and passions, and interests, and pleasures and the whole course of this world to which it is directly opposite and that we may be saved without any of those dispositions and qualifications that fit us for salvation and make us capable of enjoying it.

Did we ever hear of such cruel mercenary artifices as have been of late invented to introduce a perpetual scarcity, and enhance the price of provisions? from the motives of a dishonest, brutal covetousness, and to grind and oppress the faces of the industrious labouring poor, the support of our manufactures, and the staff of our land! — But, alas, these are not all — (must I add) — the notorious breaches and Profanations of the Sabbath — the Blasphemies and Oaths that are poured out in every place, for which we are infamous above all other nations upon earth; the too-seldom restrained and punished commissions of the most open and shameless lewdness, and, with horror I speak it, even of unnatural wickedness. Our bare-faced immoralities, and noon-day drunkenness. — And what shall we say to these sad appearances? — to these heaps and mountains of all kinds of sins that block up our steps, and disable our hands! — the destruction

tion of ensnared and corrupted youth, and, in the end, will pull down the execution of delay'd, though deserved fore judgments, and our total ruin — we are preparing to murder the bodies and souls of our unhappy children, and the rising generation by our many evil, unrestrained examples, if we do not all in our power to discountenance and prevent them. — Ah! what will our youth think and say of their fathers in their still, (and likely to prove,) worse succeeding times, if these evils continue to be conniv'd at, and unpunished! — will they not curse their names and memories? and follow them to aggravate their sufferings and condemnation in a dreadful world of eternal sorrows! — Can you be men, and sin on with such a thought! — or suffer it silently and unrepented, and, if you are able, unreformed in others? — and how more sad is it, in such a state of things to be senseless of dangers — to be sinking into indifference, or else hardening our hearts.

I would yet encourage in myself and others better hopes; and would take it as a token from God of good upon us, that he has put into your hearts, the reviving of such a society — an intimation I would humbly trust that he has designs of mercy still in store for this our dear and native land, notwithstanding all our already mentioned threat-

threatening symptoms, that he will continue to be yet *the glory in the midst of us, and upon all that glory, will be a defence*, which brings me to the last head of this discourse, viz.

IV. The helps these highly commended builders found (and you shall find) that supported and carried them through, to begin and prosecute their work with success.

And the supports that they found, (and you will find,) to this, was, the assurance what they did was for the Almighty's honour, and the conscientiousness of its being their duty, and their obedience to his command—they were sensible they were called to it by the invitation that was given them in the seasonable offer of a gracious Providence that prompted first the thought, furnished the means, and inclined, as one man, so many hearts. — As your direction and motives for further encouragement—have your eyes up to Christ, the established head and king of his church, who has said, *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*, in whose cause and warfare, and in concurrence in his labours, you are listed ; which was that *he might destroy the works of the devil*—who has given his invariable promises that he will stand by all his faithful servants, and *his strength shall be perfected in their weakness ; and no weapon formed against them*
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them shall prosper.—Never leave HIM out of your work, from whom all your strength, for it is to be derived.—He has smiled upon your design, in helping you to do *that* good, already brought about by your hands — which is an earnest he will do more and still greater things by you. And as a confirmation of your minds that you have the most reasonable and warranted grounds to expect these supplies, and your success from CHRIST, the two or three following instances I shall mention, will give you much assurance and comfort if they are well fixed, and often meditated in your minds.

Your consideration, that all knowledge and wisdom is lodged essentially in CHRIST, gives you foundation for your strongest encouragement, in expecting from Him all the light and direction that in every case shall be necessary for you—*If any man lack wisdom*, and who is without his wants of this? And you, in the many intricacies and difficulties that will frequently obtrude themselves in your way, must be supposed to have the largest measure of these wants, the divine direction is, *let it ask it of God*; let him take the requested benefaction from the hands of CHRIST who hath *received gifts* (and this among them) *for the sons of men*, in whom is hid and laid up all the treasures of

of wisdom and knowledge.—And the word of truth has added—“ *who giveth liberally.*”

Again, the investiture that he, as *mediator*, has received of all the direction and disposing of events in the whole kingdom of nature and providence, as well as in the spiritual one of salvation and grace, will lead you in your considerations to place an entire confidence in him for supplies of necessary succours and the most certain success. Upon his sending out his poor few, weak unpromising instruments in the establishing of his church and kingdom, in opposition to the rage and violent hostilities of the world, and the whole combined powers of infernal darkness (an attempt in itself, of the most hopeless unconquerable difficulty) he animates them with the account of his own sovereign uncontrollable authority, with THIS WORK OF COMMISSION, and assures them from his mouth, who was THE TRUTH, ALL, *power is given to me in HEAVEN and EARTH.* —ALL POWER!—to subdue his enemies and uphold his servants!—ALL POWER!—to give success to *all* their religious enterprize, and frustrate all their enemies best laid designs; make this then your armour of defence. The master you serve under is omnipotent to support you in the weightiest burdens of your duty, and strongest opposition of your adversaries. And what he is omni-

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potent to do, he as assuredly *will do*, for *he is faithful* (also) who has promised * and remaineth unchangeably faithful † — *He CAN NOT deny himself.*

Once more (and as a conclusion)

The consideration of his efficacious, richly abundant sacrifice *that removed* IN ONE DAY all the iniquity of *his land*, § will hearten you up in all your attempts, and prove your strongest encouragement, in labouring to reform a sinful, stiff-necked, and gain-saying people. What could not be effected in all those very many days and years, and by those innumerable sacrifices offered under the law, the all-performing *Son of God*, and *Almighty deliverer of men*, completed by ONE SACRIFICE and in ONE DAY—such superlative, amazing might was there in *the man of God's right hand—the son of man which HE had made so strong for his OWN SELF*—and it remaineth undiminished and *ever the same*—*HE altereth not*—*HE that has worked in you both to will and to do* (make not the least doubt, will also work *for and by you*.—*And if he WILL work*, who shall let?

I proceed now to the

APPLICATION of what has been delivered.

And 1st let me (as briefly as I can) address myself to you, the gentlemen and members
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* Heb. x. 23. † 2 Tim. ii. 13. § Zech. iii. 9.

of this useful truly, honourable society—who when *the strength of the bearers of burdens was decayed*, by the deaths, fallings off, declensions and coolings of this former reforming body, so that the name of a society, once so flourishing, was ceasing in a manner from amongst us, have been stirred up, in these few years past, to re-associate and offer yourselves willingly in contributing so large a share of your time, labours and substance in reviving and carrying on so good and necessary a work.—You have the thanks and praises of all truly wise and good men of whatever party; and happy would it be for them and for this land—ourselves and children if you had the encouragement and help of all their hands, in assisting you (notwithstanding the much rubbish that discourages and retards it) in building up and finishing this our securing wall——A reformation as you are generously attempting of our great metropolis, is *this* to it and its securest bulwarks, and you (if any) may be called the repairers of breaches, the restorers of paths (as are wanted and much wished) to dwell in.—To animate you in resolution under your many and various difficulties, permit me to recommend to you often to read over this historical book of Nehemiah (the good and lively patterns of a true reformer, from which I have chosen this passage
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of my text; together with that proceeding one of Ezra) gather from, and apply to yourselves all those directions, exhortations encouragements and success that you find these noble builders were blest with, and that spirited them on—The same God is with you that appeared in so eminent a manner on their side—and fix yourselves in the persuasion that more and greater are they that are for you, than they that dare or *can* be against you —Need I council you to the imitation of these wise and prosperous builders of Jerusalem every one (it is said chap. iv. verse 17.) with one of his hands rought in the work, and with the other he held a weapon.—Your own prudence I doubt not will so temper your zeal as, both of them, to be your guard and quickener in your work.—I shall not take upon me in any part of this to think it necessary, or myself capable of offering you direction.—your eyes and minds have occasions more than sufficient presented and I have no question will be turned and fixed in making your exertions upon the properest, that is, the most offensive and hurtful objects—particularly as our hopes and expectations must be in a great measure placed upon the rising generation, and as a city so populous must have a number of youth and such as are apprentices.—Attention should be paid
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especially to these circumstances on which the good order of families and the faithful diligent dispatch of business so much depend.—

If shameful and indecent pictures are suffered to be exposed in shops, so offensive to every sober and modest passer by, it will taint their early ideas, and poison their imaginations—the first door and inlet to all sins—and enflame their passions with the love of vice, that will lead them to every evil practice—these, and whatever else is of this kind, ought every where to be suppressed; as more wickedness may be learnt in one minute by the eye, from any ill representation or example than by any other means—the like infection may be caught by the ear from those swarms of idle and vagrant songsters that gather disorderly crouds, and incommode the streets, detaining youth on their lawful messages, defrauding masters of their time, and instilling the sentiments of obscenity and lewdness and breaking down the fences of bashfulness and modesty which are the defence of children and younger persons—and above all, the thronging the public and most principal ways, by nightly shameless prostitutes, who watch chiefly to seduce and make a prey of the younger and inexperienced, on returning from their labours,
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passing on errands of business, or from visiting their friends, is a snare that has proved the most ruinous to multitudes of youth, and threatens *every one*. — These I have named as popular mischiefs that lay most ordinarily in the way of corrupting and hurting those in earlier life, tho' they are indeed matter of offensive complaint to all ; and would particularly recommend to your attention and vigilance in all ways in your power to keep under and repress — so shall many rise up, and call you blessed, both of those that are endangered, and, if God shall give them a right mind, of the offenders themselves. — Every unkind reflection made upon your society is a reflection upon the laws, which you do no more than execute and enforce, and we might as well, to any purpose, have been without, if not enforced and executed — you have therefore the highest sanctions, and the strongest unanswerable defence — and may you unanimously go on and hold out in your way, with your eyes and prayers directed up to God for wisdom and success, till the visible effects of your good undertaking become more generally and remarkably conspicuous — this was good Nehemiah's practice you will see, (c. ii. iv.) he entered upon his reforming design with prayer — and may you find many continually, who shall be moved
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by your worthy example, in uniting with you, and encouraging and strengthening your hands.

That leads me in the close of all, to address in your behalf, the other part of this assembled and respected auditory (at present) not of your number, or joined to your society.

My friends and christian brethren, you see what an excellent and beneficial design many of your countrymen, neighbours, and fellow-citizens (perhaps of your acquaintance) have united and engaged in, as individuals in the same community, who have children, families or relations ; none of you but must be sensible of its real expediency and use to the public, and must share in the happy consequences and advantages resulting from it — need I, on this occasion, betray such an unkind suspicion of your good inclinations and generosity as to press you with arguments to lend it the help of your subscriptions, or at least your willing, and I would hope, liberal contributions—— they are but few, comparatively, that have given in their names to the support of this so highly needful, but yet burthensome and difficult, as well as expensive, service. — In one or other of these ways it lies in every one of your powers to lighten it and assist. — If you have any small zeal or regard
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for the honour and obedience due to Almighty God, the laws of your native land, the preservation and good order of the present generation, and the welfare of posterity—nay—as these, in some instances or other, must affect you) the true love of yourselves, you will want no other motives to incline and persuade you. How fit it is that some should make a noble stand against immorality and breach of public laws, which were instituted for our happiness, peaceable government, and common safety, and reduce the offenders by admonitions, friendly warnings, or wholesome punishment, back to order, or restrain the infection from spreading, and from further mischief. — To see the real evil of any vice, it is not enough to view it in the one or in the other individuals, we must magnify the object, and look upon it as general—suppose, for instance, every person in a nation given up to the sin of drunkenness, or sabbath-breaking, or profane swearing, or whoredom, and uncleanness; what could you pronounce of such a miserable people? how could such a disordered society longer exist, or what could keep off immediate, divine, and deserved judgments?—the evil and the certain tendency to ruin is the same in every smallest instance, though not so universal: and if allowable in any one case will admit of the same

same plea in all; since no one can pretend an exemption for himself that will not hold as strong for the same liberty in every one, and then what must become of such as are, by natural, sacred and civil constitution, rational and social beings—and, indeed of the world?—This is the way in which we should get our idea of any and every vice.—And will, or *can* any justly reflect upon a society, combined in opposing and suppressing this in all its forms, or conscientiously deny their requested support and assistances to it, who professes to believe there is a holy God, that is a declared hater and punisher of all sin? and a gracious Redeemer, that shed his blood to atone for it, and was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil? and a sacred Almighty Heavenly Spirit, that he has purchased for and promised to us to dwell in, govern and purify our hearts.

God is calling, *You, who will rise up for me against the evil doers—or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity.—* And will you not take part *with Him* against transgressors? and *with them* who commendably desire and endeavour to reform the land?—Can you bear up under that charge now, or at the awful judgment-day, in the thirteenth chapter of Ezekiel, *You have not gone up into the gaps, or made up the hedge*
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for the house of Israel.—And was there ever more occasion in a land hardly to be matched, considering our advantages and pretensions, for impiety.—Do men thus make void God's law, and is it not then time to work—high time for us to work *for God*,—and time for God to work *for us*—that all natural sense of virtue, and even common morality, may not be lost and trampled down, where christianity, in the purest and most reformed mode of it is openly professed.—O let these thoughts be working in, and have their influence over, and enlarge you to a readiness and liberality, both of your hearts and hands. — To which purpose it is proper I should, in the conclusion, lay before all here assembled, the account of this society for the REFORMATION OF MANNERS, drawn up by themselves; that I shall read from their own paper, and in their own words.

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ACCOUNT of the SOCIETY

FOR

Promoting a *Reformation of Manners.*

A S lewdness, drunkenness, profane swearing, Sabbath breaking and the like, are vices most highly displeasing to almighty God, and subversive of the true interest and happiness, not only of those individual persons who practice them, but, of every community where they are openly and frequently committed and indulged : several private persons observing with concern, the growth of these great enormities, thought they could not do better service to the publick, than by an attempt to revive and prosecute the designs of that great society for reformation, which begun in the reign of king William, (about seventy years ago) and for a great length of time received countenance and assistance, from many of the greatest and wisest persons in the nation.

But being thoroughly sensible that an attempt of this sort was of a very arduous and difficult nature, and would expose them to all the resentment which malice and wickedness could suggest, from those who hate to be reformed, to obstruct their design ; as well as fearing lest such a bold and unpopular attempt, might be censured by persons of better character as over-officious, rash and presumptuous, they judged it proper to follow the divine instruction, (i. e.) with good advice make war ; and first they applied to many of the reverend clergy in and about this city, to know
their

their sense of such an undertaking, and being, in general, encouraged to proceed, they next addressed themselves to the honourable Court of Aldermen of London, and the Benches of Justices, at Westminster, and Hickes's-Hall; and their purpose and design meeting with favourable reception from them: they then proceeded, by information to the magistrates, and legal convictions, to attempt giving a check to open vice and prophaneness.

This design first revived in the year 1757, since which time upwards of TEN THOUSAND, wilful, and obstinate offenders, have been brought to justice, such as sabbath-breakers, profane curlers and swearers, gamblers, common prostitutes, keepers of lewd-houses, sellers of obscene prints, and some for the unnatural crime of sodomy.

Great and manifold have been the good effects of this attempt, a greater respect has been paid to the sacred day, and public worship of almighty God—A better example set before children and servants.——Excess of drinking in public-houses on the Lord's-day much restrained, whereby the thoughtless poor, have in some measure been prevented from spending the fruits of their labour in drunkenness and excess on that day of sacred leisure and recess from worldly business—and many conscientious tradesmen and shopkeepers, who were carried down the stream by the prevalence of an evil custom among those of the same calling, of buying and selling on the Christian-Sabbath; have been delivered from their disagreeable bondage; which they have often acknowledged with great thankfulness to this society.

Many infamous houses (the very sinks of debauchery and wickedness) have been totally suppressed, and the keepers of them punished.—Many hundreds of common prostitutes have been taken up, and committed; several of whom, (there is reason to believe) have been brought to serious repentance and a better life; many of them have been induced to take refuge in the Magdalen-house: and others have been placed
out

'out to honest service, by the help of the society; and many unwary youths have been prevented from falling a prey to the vicious intanglements of these unhappy abandon'd women, who lie in wait to deceive and to destroy.

The society have also printed and given away several thousand books of instruction to parish officers, constables, &c. to direct and enforce the due execution of their trust—Dissuatives from Sabbath-breaking—Extracts of acts of parliament, and warnings to offenders; to prevent if possible the necessity of executing the laws against them.

The necessary expences attending these services to the public have been very great; amounting to near one thousand pounds, but the malicious prosecutions of those who have had their vicious gains obstructed by these means, have more than doubled that sum; the iniquitous methods of false evidences, by which they gained advantage over the society, have been publicly enquired into, and detected.

It is therefore humbly hoped that christians will not satisfy themselves, with commending the zeal of those who are generously giving their time and substance, and sometimes venturing their lives, for the public good; but that all who love religion and their country will vigourously lend their assistance, in a cause wherein the honour of almighty God, and interest of mankind are so much and nearly concerned; especially as a very heavy charge, which could neither be foreseen nor prevented, lies upon a number of persons who are very ill suited to bear it.

Thus

Thus have I fully acquainted you, my brethren, with every thing necessary for your information, at the desire of this truly praiseworthy, and publicly useful SOCIETY.—All I shall further request to the free and generous contribution of your hands, is the assistance and hearty concurrence of your prayers, for its increase, lasting continuance, and abundant success.—And that from the influence of its revival and example, many such may arise thro' the different and distant parts of this our sinful, while highly favoured, distinguished land ; till vice, and every kind of iniquity, is driven into corners ; and is found or named no longer amongst us—but the presence, love and religious fear of God, and manifestations of his special favour, be visibly upon us, and his Holy Spirit abiding in us—going forth in his power, as in the days of old.

And, *O Lord hear—O Lord forgive—O Lord hearken, and do—defer not for thy own sake, O our God !—for thy land, and this thy people, that are called by thy name.*

To whom Father, Son and Holy Ghost, one only living and true God, be equal and undivided glory, praises, kingdom, and dominion, now, and for ever.

F I N I S.

